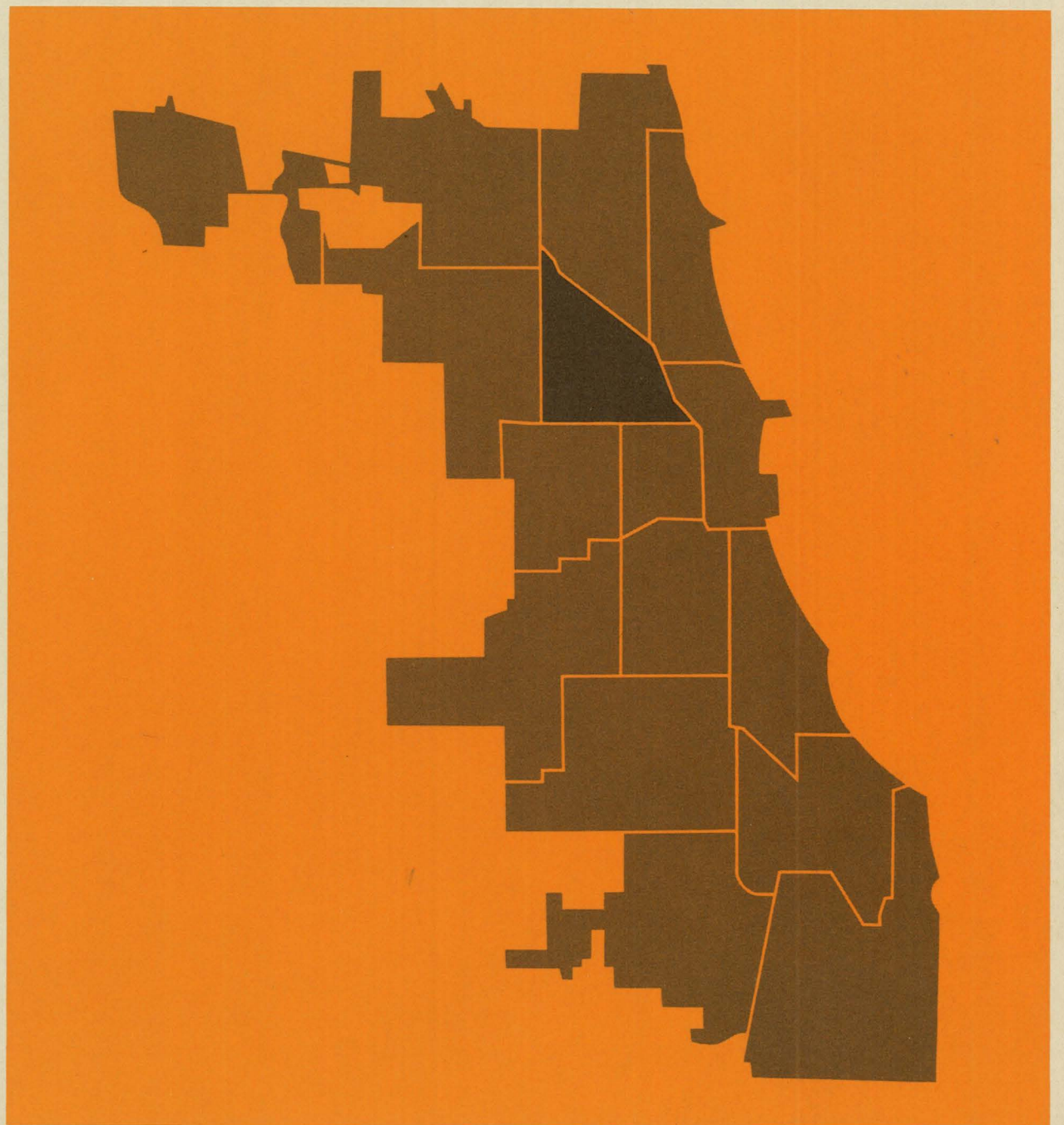


# NORTHWEST

# DEVELOPMENT AREA

Department of Development and Planning



City of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, Mayor



# Northwest Development Area

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City of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, Mayor

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Lewis W. Hill, Commissioner of Development and Planning

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## PURPOSE OF THE DEVELOPMENT AREA REPORTS

The Development Area reports have been prepared to inform Chicago citizens of the meaning of the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations for each area of the city, to aid in the exchange of information about community needs between citizens and government that is necessary to the development of a cooperative planning process, and to facilitate the co-ordination of plans and programs for community improvements. There are 16 Development Areas, covering the entire city, each with a population of 150,000 to 300,000 people and with a land area of 6 to 20 square miles.

The Development Area reports suggest land use changes, residential and industrial improvements, transportation improvements and community facilities and social programs needed to achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan in each area. The reports are intended to stimulate community discussion of issues, problems, and solutions. This discussion will lead to formulation of a planning framework for each area to be used by government and citizens for scheduling and co-ordinating programs and community improvements.

The various kinds of projects that the city undertakes need to be co-ordinated if they are to produce maximum benefits for the communities they serve. Experience has demonstrated that Chicago is too large to deal with as a whole in co-ordinating and scheduling specific projects. Thus, the Development Areas represent a very practical means of focusing the planning process on localized needs and conditions while remaining within the context of city-wide Comprehensive Plan policies and goals.

The recommendations in the Development Area reports are ideas and suggestions for consideration. They do not represent final plans for the areas, nor do they cover all issues. The reports recognize that not all planning problems have clear or immediate solutions and in some cases, questions are raised in the expectation that the best solution will evolve only through community discussion.

### The Review Process

Four steps will be followed in reviewing and

revising the Development Area reports:

—Each Development Area report will be distributed to civic organizations and other private groups, both within the local area and city-wide.

—Representatives of City Government will meet with groups and individuals in each area to discuss the report. Findings will be modified, other ideas sought, and approaches to resolving issues will be explored.

—Appropriate revisions in the proposals will then be made, which will result in a planning framework for the Development Area. After public discussion, the planning framework would be adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission as a policy guide in reviewing projects and programs for the area.

—Using the planning framework as a guide the Department of Development and Planning will work with other agencies to modify and co-ordinate programs and projects to meet the area's critical needs and to achieve local objectives.

Chicago is constantly changing. Therefore, from time to time, each planning framework will be reviewed and adjusted or amended to reflect new needs or changes in objectives as they are identified in the continuing process of planning.

### From Plans to Action

In recent years new transportation facilities, urban renewal, and other public and private developments have greatly improved the city's appearance and livability, and the opportunities and capabilities of its people. Still greater effort and further improvement will be necessary if Chicago is to meet its commitment to the strategic objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. In the coming years sections of the city must be rebuilt or rehabilitated to meet the rising expectations for living standards of all its people. New ways must be found for meeting social concerns, for strengthening capabilities and for broadening opportunities. Achieving the kind of city envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan will call for the ideas, widespread support, and involvement of all of the people of Chicago.



## NORTHWEST DEVELOPMENT AREA

The Northwest Development Area is a triangular section defined by the Lake St. corridor, a concentration of commercial and manufacturing activities; the John F. Kennedy Expressway, a major highway which will soon include rapid transit service along much of its length; and by Pulaski Road.

Important features in the Northwest Development Area include the more than 200 acre Humboldt Park, the Boulevard system that links the park with other major recreational facilities, and the many nationality based churches and institutions that are important social centers as well as architectural landmarks.

For over seventy-five years, the Northwest Development Area has provided moderate cost housing and community life for immigrants to this country and to the City. In most parts of this area, the earliest arrivals were Germans and Scandinavians, followed by Poles, Russian Jews, and Italians. Most recently, these newcomers have been primarily Spanish speaking families from Puerto Rico, although there are still a small number of new arrivals from Eastern Europe.

The Northwest Development Area should continue to provide the housing and institutional support needed by newcomers to the City. It could also provide a desirable environment for young families looking for moderate cost residential opportunities close to the center of the City. The policies of the *Comprehensive Plan of Chicago* call for an appraisal of the area's functions and the direction of public and private programs to provide the greatest possible community support. As a basis for discussion, this report is intended to present an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Northwest Development Area in terms of housing, environment, economic capability, and institutional support.

The housing stock of the area includes a wide variety of types and conditions. Single

family homes and two and three flat buildings are the dominant types, although larger apartment buildings are found throughout the area. Most construction is of masonry, but many frame structures dating from the last part of the nineteenth century are still in use. While there has been little new construction in the past fifty years, much of the housing has been well maintained, and most of the remainder can be improved through conservation and rehabilitation programs.

Among the major assets of the community are its strong and active neighborhood organizations and the generally high quality of community maintenance. Local economic support is good; job opportunities exist within the community, and in the industrial concentrations to the east, south, and west. Access to other employment centers is provided by the Congress-Milwaukee and Lake rapid transit lines which provide excellent service to the Central Business District and to many industrial concentrations.

The Northwest Development Area has the potential to meet the needs of young families and newcomers to the area, but the growing complexity of urban life and the recent influx of new groups have combined with aging physical facilities to create a need for improvements in both the physical environment and in the provision of social services. The needs of families who have limited economic capability and large numbers of children, the aspirations of the Spanish speaking population, and the needs of the elderly people of the area are of special and immediate concern.

General community needs include increased local park and play spaces, better street lighting and maintenance, the reduction of congestion on major streets and the removal of excess traffic in residential neighborhoods.







## Planning Framework

### Characteristics

#### Northwest Development Area

Residence in Good Condition	
Residence in Need of Some Improvement	
Residence in Need of Major Repair	
Business Concentration	
Industry in Good Condition	
Industry in Need of Some Improvement	
Park	
Institution	

**A** Elevated Structure a Blighting Influence

**B** Housing and Environmental Problems

**C** Adequate Housing with Some Environmental Problems

**D** Well-Maintained Residential Community

**E** Over-crowded High School

**F** Obsolete Commercial

**G** Diagonal Street

**H** Under-used Regional Park

**I** Railroad Embankment Divides Community

**J** Adverse Mix of Land Uses

## Objectives

Improvement programs in the Northwest Development Area should be directed toward the following objectives, based on the Improvement Plan component of the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Improve the quality and supply of low and moderate cost housing through the application of housing code enforcement, and selective rehabilitation and rebuilding programs. Encourage variety of housing type and unit size giving special attention to the creation of a residential environment meeting the particular needs of families with small children.

2. Provide increased recreation facilities with emphasis on neighborhood parks and play spaces, field houses, and other year-round facilities. Because of the present shortage of open space at school sites, it will be particularly important to relate new recreation spaces to educational facilities.

3. Provide educational facilities in the quantity and quality needed to sustain programs designed to meet the specific needs of the Northwest Development Area's residents.

4. Improve the program orientation, coordination, and distribution of the many public and private services now operating in the area. Provide adequate facilities for these services in centralized locations for greater community convenience. Increase the availability and extent of services to families and individuals in the areas of physical and mental health, welfare, neighborhood improvement, employment, crime and delinquency prevention, and other particular needs of the Northwest Development Area's communities.

5. Encourage industrial consolidation and renewal of business centers to increase the strong local employment base and to reduce any presently adverse effects of these activities on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

6. Improve major streets to reduce congestion and remove unwanted traffic from residential streets. Continue the improvement of rapid transit facilities begun with the removal of a large section of the Logan Square elevated and the new extension of the Congress-Milwaukee Line. Support the consolidation of rail facilities and the reduction of rail lines through the community.



Residence

In 1960, 312,500 people lived in the Northwest Development Area, a 15 per cent population decrease from 1950. Generally, the area within a 2½ mile radius from the Loop was built up by the 1870's, while the remainder was settled by 1900. Small sections in the northern part were settled after the turn of the century.

Many of the older frame houses were built just after the Chicago Fire of 1871, as most of this area was not within the city limits at that time and thus not covered by the fire ordinance. Another serious problem relates to housing units above vacant or deteriorated commercial facilities. These problems are compounded by age, the effects of mixed uses and the more recent influences of changes in economic level and age composition of the population.

However, the Northwest Development Area benefits from the near Loop location of its southeast corner and from the rapid transit

service supplied by the Logan Square and Lake Street elevated lines. The recently approved Kennedy Expressway rapid transit extension will further improve services in the area. These major transportation routes, forming corridors of high accessibility, present opportunities for more intense use. This is most evident in the section between Milwaukee Avenue, with its rapid transit facilities, and the Kennedy Expressway. Since the Expressway is presently used at close to maximum capacity, further development should center around the Milwaukee Avenue corridor rapid transit stops.

For discussion purposes, the Northwest Development Area has been divided into four sub-areas:

- The East Humboldt Park—Near Northwest Conservation Area designated in 1957. It is bounded by the Kennedy Expressway, the Northwestern railway tracks near Kinzie Street, California Avenue, and Fullerton Parkway.
- A North Sub-Area bounded by Pulaski Road, the Kennedy Expressway and Belmont Avenue;
- A Central Sub-Area bounded by Belmont Avenue, the Kennedy Expressway, California Avenue, Bloomingdale Avenue (Milwaukee Railroad embankment), and Pulaski Road;
- A South Sub-Area bounded by Bloomingdale Avenue, California Avenue, the Northwestern railway tracks, and Pulaski Road.

The following chart indicates housing conditions as of the 1960 Census of Housing in the four sub-areas:

Areas	Population	Housing Units	Percent Deficient*	Owner Occupied
Total	312,560	107,420	26.6	26.5
North	8,350	2,830	1.8	41.2
Central	83,950	30,110	14.4	28.2
South	63,690	21,310	14.9	31.0
Conservation Area	156,570	53,170	39.7	22.5

\*Deficient housing units include the following census categories: sound units lacking some or all plumbing facilities, all deteriorating and dilapidated units.



Substantial, well maintained housing such as this in areas of mixed or deteriorating uses can form the nucleus for rehabilitation and new development.





Unkempt vacant lots are too often used for the dumping of refuse. They become factors in environmental blight as well as dangerous playgrounds. Appropriate treatment could turn such lots into valuable community open space.

Much of the Conservation Area is typified by this street. While the structures are older, the maintenance has been good. Housing such as this can provide low and moderate cost homes for younger families wishing to live near the center of the city.



**East Humboldt Park-Near Northwest Conservation Area.** This sub-area, the oldest part of the Development Area, has the most serious housing problems. The shortage of vacant land suitable for residential development has permitted little new construction since 1900. Recently, housing code enforcement has resulted in the demolition of unsafe structures in the oldest sections.

Existing vacant parcels are small and scattered and do not usually attract private developers. Rebuilding and re-utilization will be important to prevent empty lots from acting as a blighting influence. Small and scattered vacant lots can be used for additional community facilities, such as off-street parking or recreation. Since such improvements can be made with minimum capital outlay, these parcels could be considered a resource for future community rebuilding, thus avoiding premature redevelopment. Where large enough parcels exist or can be readily assembled, residential construction should be given priority. The programs of the Chicago Dwellings Association might supplement private initiative in such construction.

Maintenance of the housing in the Conservation Area has been relatively good. The area bounded by Damen, Chicago and California Avenues, and Division Street contains some very sound and attractive housing. Still most housing within the conservation area is very old, and almost 40 per cent of all units had become structurally deficient by 1960. Home owners and landlords have had difficulty in obtaining home improvement loans. This has, of course, contributed to the further deterioration of the housing stock. This trend has apparently continued since 1960, and is particularly noticeable in the corridor along Milwaukee Avenue.

Certain desirable changes are taking place in the Conservation Area as a result of public action. The 12-acre Noble-Division Project of the Department of Urban Renewal will result in nearly 500 housing units of a variety of types for moderate income

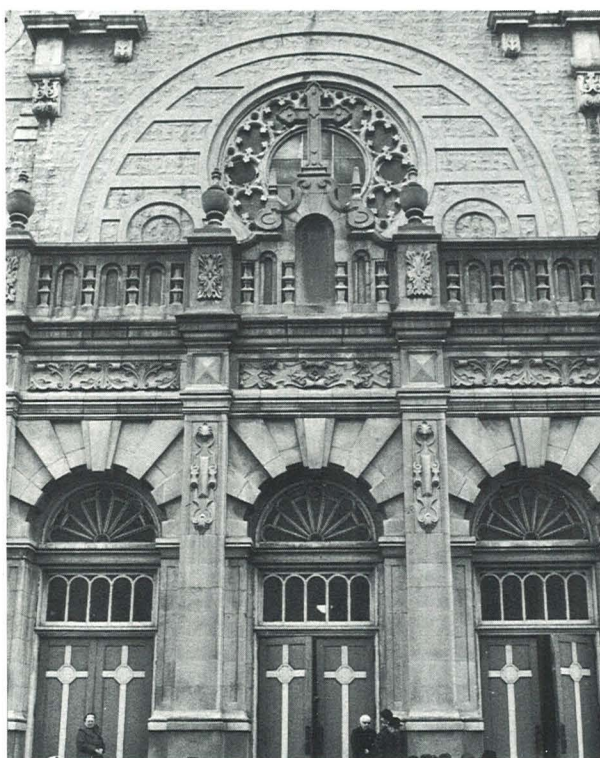


families. The Chicago Housing Authority has already built two apartment buildings for the elderly.

The neighborhoods have traditionally been nationality and language oriented, generally Italian, Polish, and Ukranian. While many younger families have moved out, the older people and some young families wish to remain. Thus the elderly population is growing as is the number of families at lower economic levels. These changes in age and economic characteristics of the population have been accompanied by declining levels of home maintenance in some areas.

This sub-area of the Northwest Development Area has been a good source of low and moderate cost housing. This supply should be maintained, although some replacement housing must be provided in areas of excessive deterioration.

While it is clear that improvements in housing conditions are necessary, the kinds of public and private programs and the timing and coordination of these programs need to be determined. Recently the Department of Urban Renewal announced two areas within the Conservation Area which will be studied to determine the best methods for maintenance and improvement, and future development of the community. Neighborhood groups are at work with the Department of Urban Renewal to develop programs of appropriate type and scale for their area.



The many churches and religious institutions in the Northwest Development Area have been an important factor in the growth of strong and stable communities. They have also lent interesting architectural accents to the area.



## North Sub-Area

The North Sub-Area was built up after the turn of the century. Except for some commercial development along major streets, it is a residential area with many fine homes. There are also some small apartment buildings, usually at corner locations. The neighborhood has been very well maintained. Many of the structures are at least fifty years old and there will be a need for continued code enforcement. Additional city facilities, including parks and recreation areas, will be needed if young families are to be retained or attracted.

## Central Sub-Area

Housing in the Central Sub-Area, a mixture of single family, two family and small apartment structures, was largely built up around the turn of the century. Despite its age, the area has been well maintained and there are no large blighted areas. Neighborhood maintenance programs, such as those sponsored by community organizations and block clubs, can be effective in preserving and strengthening the quality of environment. Some small areas to the east of Milwaukee Avenue and near Logan Square show a need of improvement that may require public resources.

A major open space feature is introduced by the boulevard system which has been the traditional locale for institutions such as churches and hospitals, as well as for housing of substantial quality. Many of the residential structures lining these parkways show an effort to take advantage of the value of this unique urban setting. Elimination of through traffic from the boulevards and their further development for community use would give impetus to maintenance and improvement. Where adequate public transportation exists, for example in the Logan Square neighborhood, the boulevards could provide excellent opportunities for creating additional park space.

Another community problem is the elevated right of way of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific R.R. Like many other elevated embankments, it is unsightly and unkempt. Railroad underpasses create dangerous traffic conditions in some locations. There is a large industrial concentration at the intersection of the two Milwaukee Road lines near Hamlin and Bloomingdale Avenues. Consideration of residential-industrial mix and the need for industrial

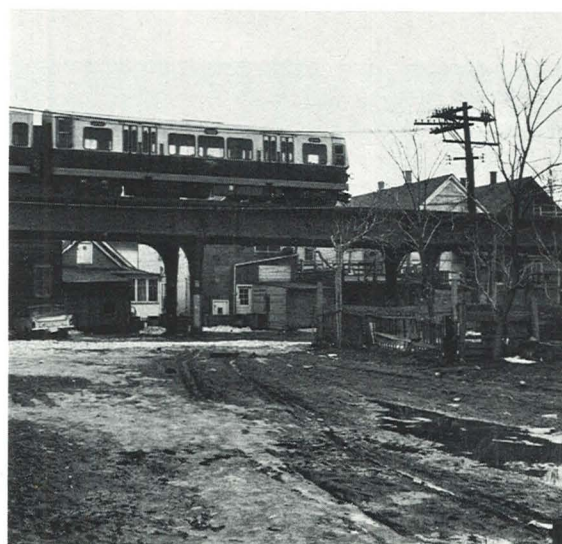
consolidation is warranted here, as well as in the southern and western parts of the South Sub-Area.

## South Sub-Area

Housing here is old, with only a few structures built after 1914. Two and three flat buildings predominate, but there are many single family homes as well as some larger apartment buildings. The high owner-occupancy shown in the 1960 census suggests that most of the two and three-flat buildings have resident owners. There have been indications of substantial turnover in this area since 1960, but the new residents also seem to be following the previous ownership pattern. Maintenance and community housekeeping have been good considering the age of the neighborhood. The proportion of land covered by buildings is



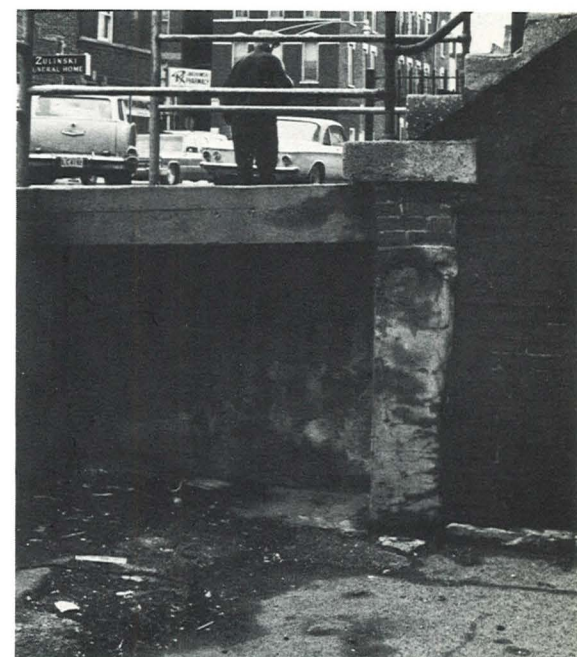
The well maintained, low density residential section that forms the northern triangle of the Development Area is one of its most desirable neighborhoods.



The Milwaukee Avenue Elevated structure between Paulina Street and Logan Square is a factor in the deterioration and blighting of adjacent properties.

high and thus a shortage of public open space is all the more critical. Humboldt and Garfield Parks, while major facilities accessible from many areas, cannot function as local recreation space for all parts of the Sub-area. Here, too, the boulevard system could contribute to local recreation space if through traffic can be eliminated.

One Chicago Housing Authority apartment building for the elderly has been constructed at Franklin Boulevard and Drake Avenue and CHA family housing is in the planning stage for a site at the corner of Franklin Boulevard and Albany Avenue. This area would benefit from a concerted conservation effort; such action at this time could prevent the need for major renewal and greater expense in the future.



Residential structures on below street level lots present maintenance difficulties and first floors with appearance of basements.



## Recreation

Usable local recreation space is lacking in many parts of the Northwest Development Area. There is less than one acre of park space per 1000 persons in the Development Area, well below the Comprehensive Plan minimum standard of two acres per 1000 persons. The Northwest Development Area thus is ranked as a high priority area for local park development. If Humboldt Park, a city-wide facility, is not included, the total park space for the 10½ square miles of the Development Area amounts to only 48 acres, or 0.15 acres per 1000 persons. However, the edges of Humboldt Park which are useful for local recreation provide an additional 134 acres for a usable local total of 0.58 acres per 1000 persons. Plan standards then call for the addition of approximately 400 acres to open space use in the Development Area.

Wicker Park for example is pleasant and well used; however, most existing open space is not fully used. The development of multiple use designs for open space that would provide for different age groups and the provision of more play equipment in park areas would increase the value of these areas.

The Board of Education provides some additional recreation areas adjacent to schools, but as most of the schools are older, the space and facilities are limited in size and use. It will be particularly important to relate new open space to the location of existing and proposed schools.

Open space deficiency is least critical in the North Sub-Area where development is primarily single family housing with play space around residences. Some larger spaces suitable for active sports are still needed. Neighborhoods not adjacent to Humboldt Park in the South Sub-Area need additional open space. The lack of recreational space is most severe in the eastern and southeastern parts of the Development Area where population is most dense and schools are most crowded.

Additional recreation space will be difficult to obtain in the Northwest Development Area because of the overall density of development. The resource of the Boulevard system is presently unusable as it is serving as a major traffic carrier and the parkways have been provided with few facilities for

active or passive recreation. The elimination of all but local traffic from the Boulevard system could provide up to 65 acres of additional recreational area.

Another source of open space would be the conversion of some of the local streets in residential areas into small parks. Portions of closed streets could also be used for neighborhood parking.

Humboldt Park is a major city-wide facility although its edges do serve neighborhood and local needs. Future programs for the park should emphasize local facilities (such as play-grounds, totlots, benches and play-fields) along the edges, while providing for activities such as skating and swimming, and increased fieldhouse programs in the interior. Automobile traffic through the Park should be reduced by the development of alternate routes.



Well designed park areas provide a wide range of recreational facilities for people of all ages. Humboldt Park is one of the most varied and successful of Chicago's large inland parks.



Playgrounds in intensely developed areas such as this one could be made more attractive for community use through more imaginative design and equipment.



## Education

In 1966, 58,500 students were enrolled in private and public schools in the Northwest Development Area. 70 per cent of these students were enrolled in the public school system.

*The 1966 Long Range School Facilities Program, Working Draft, Superintendent of Schools\**, classified 43 per cent of the Northwest's elementary schools as needing replacement and an additional 40 per cent as needing extensive rehabilitation. The remaining six schools were built in the last ten years, and four of these were overcrowded by 1966. Twenty-six of the 35 elementary schools now exceed the recommended standard for class size.

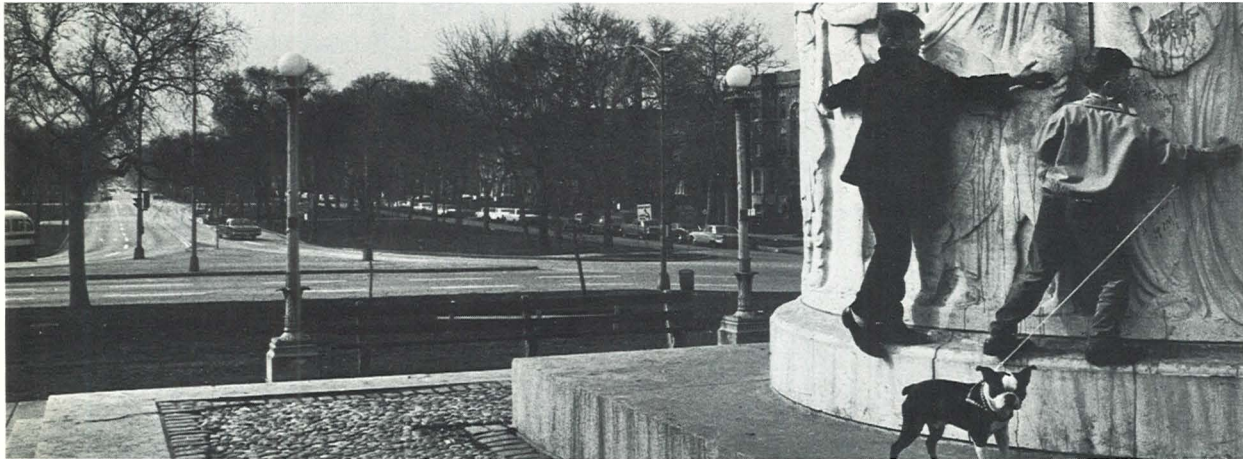
School sites in the Northwest are generally too small by today's standards. Outdoor play facilities, minimal to begin with, have often been taken for staff parking, for building additions, and for mobile classroom units used to alleviate overcrowded conditions. What remains are small, paved spaces ill-suited to present recreational programs. The situation is particularly critical in the case of the two general high schools. Tuley High School has no such space at all, and Wells has only a half-block paved lot which is not adjacent to the school.

There are now active school programs for teaching English as a second language and for training bi-lingual teachers. Success in these programs is important for the adult as well as the school-age population.

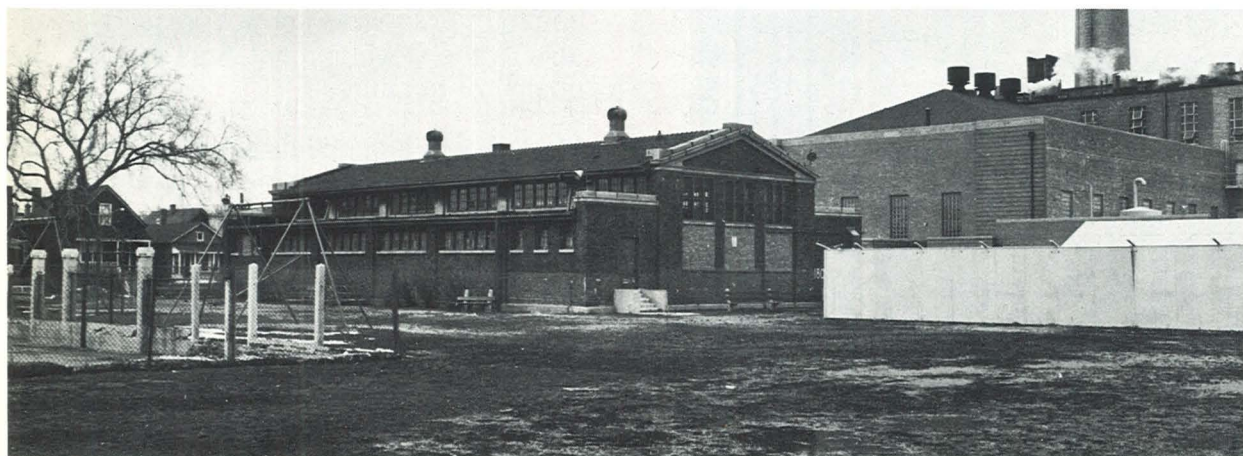
A number of social centers, operated by the Board of Education in school buildings, offer community activities after school hours. Improvements in school plants and recreation facilities would allow for expansion of these services as well as evening classes for vocational, elementary, and high school training for adults.

There are two vocational schools and a social adjustment school for girls in addition to the general high schools in the Development Area. The two general high schools, Tuley and Wells, are overcrowded and in need of rehabilitation. Tuley is pre-

\*The report entitled *Increasing Desegregation of Facilities, Students, and Vocational Education Programs* was released by the Board of Education during the final publication stages of this report. Its recommendations are therefore not reflected here.



Elimination of through traffic from the boulevard system and the closing of several of the traffic lanes could greatly increase usable open space in many parts of the community.



Improved treatment and maintenance of open spaces could add to the recreational opportunities of the Area.



sently dependent on two branches located in elementary schools. The Board of Education is considering sites for a central north high school which would help alleviate this overcrowding. A further desirable improvement would be the expansion of the existing high school sites to provide for additional physical facilities and recreation space.

In general, the Northwest Development Area meets the Comprehensive Plan recommended standard of branch libraries within a one-mile service radius of residential areas.

There are presently four public library branches in the Northwest, three of which are in rented facilities. The Comprehensive Plan indicates that branches in rented space should be accommodated in library-owned buildings. New library branches should be part of community oriented centers, which might include commercial facilities, schools, and social service centers.



Old and overcrowded schools with insufficient recreational space should be replaced or rehabilitated. In particular, recreational facilities associated with school plants should be enlarged and developed to serve the whole community.

## Social Development

The population of the Northwest Development Area has always been highly diversified. Early immigrant groups settled in the area at a time when there was a large market for unskilled and semi-skilled labor which provided numerous opportunities for economic improvement. These residents brought with them social and community institutions, based upon religious and nationality traditions which helped in the adjustment to urban life.

These patterns of community strength are not so strongly developed in the case of the most recent arrivals, primarily rural Puerto Ricans who have concentrated in the southeast section of the area. These newcomers face a present and historical problem of acceptance as did many of the earlier groups. As a result they have concentrated in areas of older housing that have become less desirable to the more established population groups. Those recently arrived have not yet acquired the capabilities demanded in an employment market now requiring high levels of skill. The Puerto Rican community is rapidly developing the necessary leadership and strength to deal effectively with these concerns.

There is an increasing proportion of elderly people in the Northwest Development Area, a result of both an increased life expectancy and the movement of second and third generations to newer residential areas of the City. The population over 65 is composed of many individuals living on fixed incomes and having specialized needs in housing, recreation, medical care, transportation and other areas. These social and community services are not presently available in the Development Area in sufficient quality or quantity.

Many public and private agencies are working to improve conditions in the Development Area. *The 1966 Social Services Directory* (Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago) lists some forty private service agencies in the area, including day care centers, boy's clubs, and health facilities. These services are, however, not distributed evenly throughout the Development Area. Various public services are also available through the Social Security Administration, the Cook County Department of Public Aid, and the Chicago Board of Health, all



of which maintain offices and stations in the Development Area. The Board of Education and the Park District also provide after school and vacation programs for school age and adult population.

While most of these programs are directed to the provision of services to assure essential standards of the physical and social environment there are other programs that attempt to deal with the basic dynamics of increasing people's participation in the life of the City. The training for, and the provision of, a wide range of job opportunities is an important aspect of any effort in this direction.

The programs of the Commission on Human Relations to promote better understanding among neighbors are important in this context, as are those of the Division Street outpost of the Chicago Committee on Urban Opportunity and those of the Commission on Youth Welfare, whose West Town and Northwest Units include within their boundaries the entire Development Area. The Commission on Youth Welfare does not emphasize the provision of direct services; rather it works to strengthen community support systems and to build cooperative relations among the various sectors of the community. The Commission's programs in the Northwest Development Area are helping the Spanish speaking and non-white populations to form institutions that will help them to take advantage of opportunities offered by the City. The work of the Commission on Youth Welfare toward the prevention of juvenile delinquency and the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders supplements the work of several privately endowed settlement houses that have been very effective. The Northwest Community Organization is an important example of a group working to increase understanding and improve conditions in the Area.

Many organizations are working to increase their knowledge of the Spanish speaking community, exploring its overall needs and attitudes, or its existing potentials and capabilities. Additional information and understanding will be increasingly necessary in order to develop more meaningful programs, emphasizing self-respect, determination towards realizable goals, and the removal of social barriers.

## **Public Health and Safety**

The problems of public health and safety have become increasingly important in improvement programs for Chicago's communities. New programs in public health care, crime and fire prevention, and air and water pollution control are already underway and are constantly being expanded and improved. A high level of public health and safety, however, cannot be achieved without a direct involvement of the citizens themselves. The Chicago Police Department Community Workshops, for example, are designed to better acquaint the community with the problems of public safety and to obtain its aid and cooperation in crime prevention.

The Chicago Board of Health maintains an Infant Welfare station in the Logan Square area. Other parts of the Development Area receive services from the Infant Welfare Society. The Development Area will benefit from one of the District Health Centers now being planned by the Board of Health for various sections of the City, as well as from the establishment of a system of community mental health centers developed in cooperation with the State of Illinois Department of Mental Health.

In addition to public services, there are several other organizations in the Northwest Development Area that provide for the health needs of the community; the Infant Welfare Society of Chicago provides prenatal care and health services for children up to six years of age; the Planned Parenthood Association provides information and clinical services for family planning; and the Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago provides home nursing services and patient care instruction.

The seven hospitals in the Development Area are privately operated. While they are primarily oriented to general hospital services, they perform a valuable function in the provision of emergency treatment and charity patient care.

Although the Northwest Development Area is served by four police districts, two of the district stations are actually located within the area. The current program of the Police Department as described in the Comprehensive Plan calls for the elimination of one of the district stations and the establish-



ment of a new district station and area headquarters complex. Thirteen fire stations are distributed in the Development Area. To increase the efficiency of the fire protection system, some of the older facilities will be phased out and new comprehensive facilities developed.

## Business

Milwaukee Avenue is one of Chicago's longest and most intensively developed commercial strips. Many shopping concentrations at street intersections show considerable vitality while other facilities in between are declining. This is typical of the extensive retail-commercial development along most of the arterial streets in the Northwest Development Area. In pre-auto days, these streets were important public transportation routes, and convenience shops developed along them. Changes in people's shopping patterns, the lack of off-street parking and loading facilities, and the attraction of outlying shopping centers within easy expressway reach have tended to reduce sales in these areas.

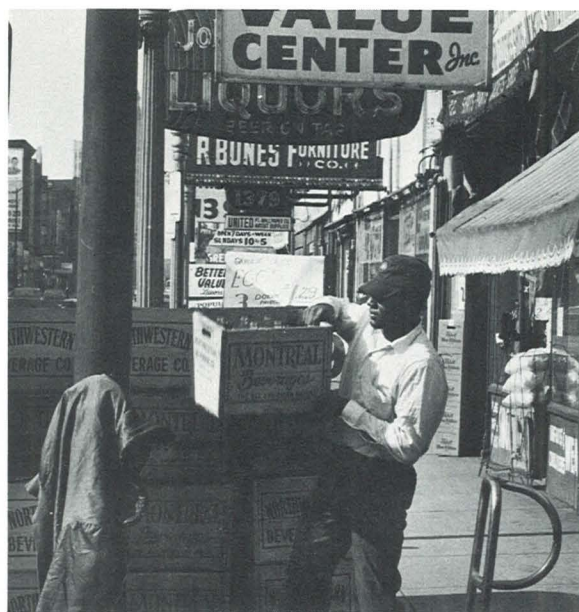
To improve the Northwest Development Area's environment, it will be necessary to replace vacant stores with other uses and to concentrate retail facilities into attractive centers at major intersections. The eventual widening of some major streets in the Development Area will help to bring about these improvements; land vacated by obsolete commercial structures could in many cases be redeveloped for residential use.

The most important shopping and convenience goods centers in the Northwest Development Area at present are located at North and Pulaski, Division, Ashland and Milwaukee, Chicago and Ashland, Logan Square Area (Diversey, Kimball and Milwaukee), and North and Milwaukee. Certain of these, most noticeably North and Pulaski and Logan Square have remained economically viable, while others are in need of improvement. In particular, the Division, Ashland and Milwaukee triangle offers an excellent opportunity for commercial consolidation and redevelopment. Improved traffic control could open the square for pedestrian use and could encourage the development of a modern shopping center near the Noble-Division Urban Renewal Project and the many community institutions nearby. The Ashland-

Division area has traditionally been a center for Polish American organizations, such as the Polish National Alliance, the Polish Museum, Polish language newspaper offices and nationality parishes. Although the Polish population in the area is decreasing, the possibility of strengthening this institutional center should be considered.

The shopping concentration centered at North and Milwaukee is showing signs of deterioration. This center should become a convenience shopping facility near the rapid transit stop. This would allow residential redevelopment of a large stretch of Milwaukee Ave.

The construction of the new Kennedy Expressway rapid transit line may encourage the redevelopment of deteriorating commercial frontages for residential uses near the present Logan Square station. Emphasis for the commercial redevelopment in this area should be on the Milwaukee-Diversey



This section of Milwaukee Avenue shows typical commercial congestion resulting from inadequate off-street parking and loading facilities. Such strip developments should be consolidated into new centers with adequate arrangements for automobiles and pedestrians.

shopping area. The southern extension of this area, reaching almost to Logan Square, has many vacancies and marginal uses. The placement of exits for the new Logan Square subway station will be an important factor in the development of the area. Potentials for further improvement could be studied in relation to closing of sections of the southern part of Milwaukee Avenue to provide for pedestrian malls connected to commercial and residential areas.

## Industry

Although the Northwest Development Area is largely residential in nature, scattered industry exists throughout and a major industrial concentration is found along its southern boundary. Another important industrial concentration follows the Milwaukee Road tracks running east to west along Bloomingdale Avenue. There is a large industrial area lining the North branch of the Chicago River adjacent to the De-



The Division-Ashland-Milwaukee triangle would be excellent location for a commercial improvement project, centered around the development of a pedestrian plaza. This could be coordinated with the primarily residential Noble and Division Urban Renewal Project and with the many nationality oriented institutions nearby.



velopment Area. There are signs of industrial rehabilitation, and some new buildings or plant additions have been constructed, especially in the southern industrial areas. Many opportunities for new industry or other uses exist in presently underused property.

The largest parcel of industrial land is shared by the Chicago and Northwestern Railway and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad yards. If consolidation of these yards could be brought about, some of this land could be freed for new industrial development.

Industrial uses often do not make good neighbors in residential neighborhoods. Almost without exception, off street parking and loading facilities are insufficient, causing congestion in residential streets. These conditions are most prevalent in the areas of the larger industrial concentrations which follow the railroad rights of way. Phasing out residential uses in industrial corridors would help to provide needed space for parking and loading facilities, and for some industrial expansion that would help firms remain in the area.

Many of the industrial and commercial facilities around Hubbard St. serve the Central Business District. Older structures in this area are often in poor condition but they perform an important function as "incubators" for new industries.

## Transportation

Traffic patterns will be improved by the upgrading of mile and half-mile streets to primary and secondary thoroughfare standards as identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The development of the mile street system will provide relief for residential neighborhoods by eliminating much through traffic from local streets and from the boulevard system.

Two major traffic problems in the Northwest Development Area are the lack of differentiation between major and local streets and the conflict between vehicular traffic and commercial land uses. The latter is most evident along Milwaukee Avenue with its many awkward six-point intersections. Before the construction of the Kennedy Expressway, it was the principal northwest route to the Loop. As the Kennedy Expressway is used near capacity, Milwaukee



Small residential pockets in industrial districts frequently do not provide a desirable environment for living. Such pockets should gradually be phased out to allow for the creation of off-street parking and loading areas, and for plant expansion.

Avenue is again becoming a major artery. If Milwaukee Avenue is de-emphasized when the primary and secondary thoroughfares are improved, the awkward intersections could be eliminated.

Traffic problems also exist in the industrial concentration along the southern boundary of the Development Area. Most of the property is occupied by light industrial, warehousing and commercial concerns mixed with occasional housing. Heavy truck traffic, noise, and congestion are all aspects of the problem. Because most of the streets carry little through traffic many could probably be redesigned to better serve local industry.

The Development Area is well served by public transportation. The CTA Congress-Milwaukee line provides the community with excellent rapid transit service. This route runs as a subway along Milwaukee Avenue to Paulina Street and then continues as an elevated to Logan Square. Stations are located at half-mile intervals. This line is being extended as a subway from Logan Square to the Kennedy Expressway, where it will run in the median to Milwaukee and Central Avenues. A new station will be built near the intersection of Belmont and Kimball Avenues. The remaining elevated structure should be replaced in a subway or depressed right-of-way at a later stage.

The Lake Street Elevated offers convenient service to the Loop for residents of the southern part of the Development Area. CTA bus routes connect all parts of the community with rapid transit lines, the Loop and other parts of the City.

Milwaukee Avenue and Western Avenue are identified in the Comprehensive Plan as corridors of high accessibility. Western Avenue would include express transit. These will provide opportunities for higher intensity development at various locations as part of an area-wide improvement program.

There are three rail lines in the Northwest. The C&NW mainline to the western suburbs forms the southern boundary of the Development Area. This route is shared as far as Western Avenue with the Milwaukee Road mainline which then curves slowly to the northwest. This elevated rail line is generally in good condition and heavily used, both by through-rail traffic and by industry located along its route. The third line is a Milwaukee Road spur running east to west through the Development Area at Bloomingdale Avenue. Much of the industry scattered along this line is old; studies show that this line is little used by local industries. Phasing out the line in the area east of Kedzie Avenue would encourage community maintenance and improvement in adjacent areas.

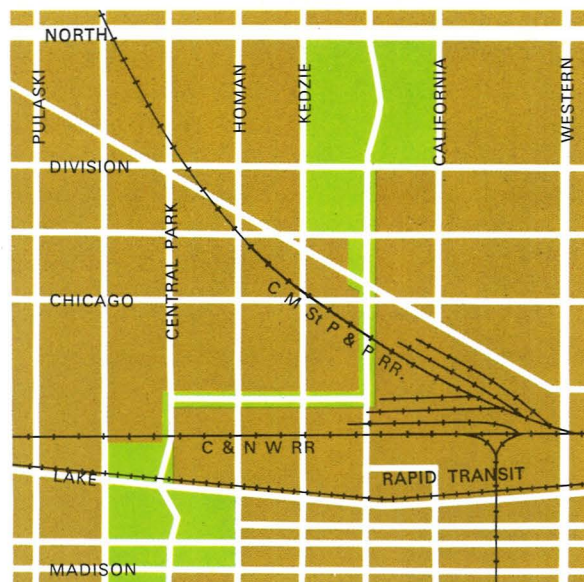


## Transportation Patterns in The Northwest Area

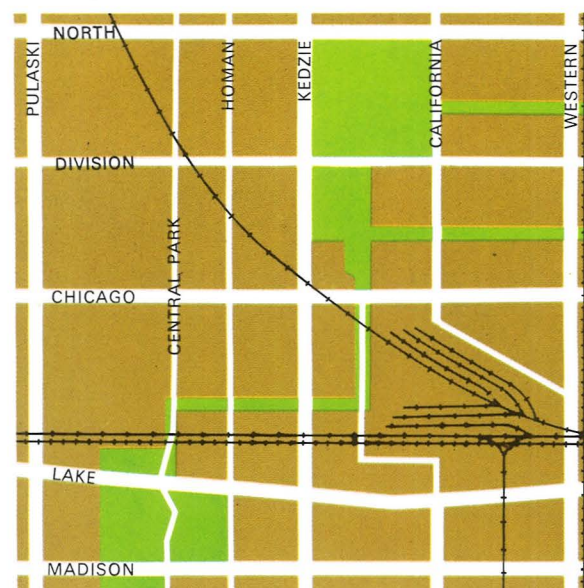
The accompanying diagrams show transportation patterns in the area bounded by North, Western, Madison, and Pulaski. The close spacing of existing streets, traffic volumes, and the rail yard create a fragmented pattern and congest residential areas. Humboldt Park would benefit from the reduction of through traffic.

Alternative A shows both Central Park and Homan-Kimball as major through traffic carriers west of Kedzie. Sacramento and California would provide service between Kedzie and Western and would continue to be routed around the railyard. Vacated streets would provide opportunities for greenway extension. The potential for express transit along Western Avenue is shown, along with the relocation of the Lake Street elevated line to the Northwestern Railway right-of-way.

Alternative B illustrates the upgrading of Central Park to serve as the secondary thoroughfare between Pulaski and Kedzie. The railyard would be reduced in size and California Avenue would tunnel under the rail lines. In this sketch plan, the Lake Street elevated line would be relocated along Madison Street.



EXISTING

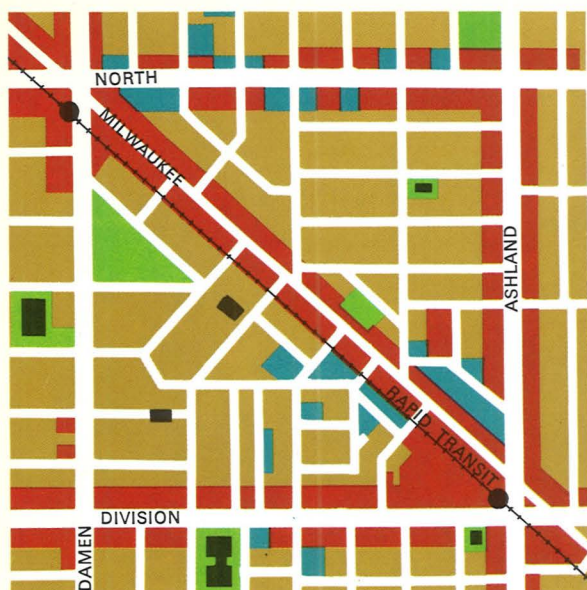


ALTERNATIVE A



ALTERNATIVE B





EXISTING



ALTERNATIVE A



ALTERNATIVE B



ALTERNATIVE C

Existing

Residential

Institutions and Parks

Business

Industry



## Environmental Patterns in The Northwest Area

These illustrations show existing environmental patterns in the area surrounding Wicker Park, and diagram three alternatives for redesign that would improve the area in keeping with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The sketches are illustrative of the principles applicable to planning for this area.

Alternative A envisions the relocation of the elevated line underground and the removal of commercial properties along a partially closed Milwaukee Avenue. Street closures would be made to channel through traffic away from residential areas and reduce the number of intersections with major streets (North, Ashland, Division and Damen). Vacated street rights-of-way could be redeveloped with park-malls. Deteriorating commercial properties along North Avenue would be replaced with housing, while business in good condition would remain along Ashland.

Alternative B shows how the Milwaukee Avenue corridor could be retained as a commercial concentration, with housing replacing deteriorating businesses along North Avenue, Ashland, and Division. Street closures would be made to improve traffic patterns, and additional open-space would be developed.

Alternative C illustrates possibilities for highly concentrated commercial centers at Damen and North and at Ashland-Division. Closing of Milwaukee Avenue would permit development of a large open-space area similar to a "village green", connected to other parks and institutions by malls and greenways.

Improvement of housing conditions is indicated in all of the alternatives, and locations for new housing, open-space, and community facilities could be provided through street closings and removal of excess commercial strips.



## SUMMARY

The illustration opposite this summary is designed to present an overview of the major concepts identified through the Development Area process at this stage. Through this device it is possible to see how each of these ideas contributes to the design of a total fabric for the Development Area:

**A.** The East Humboldt Park—Near Northwest Conservation Area is most in need of code enforcement and building maintenance action. The recent announcement of two Department of Urban Renewal Study Areas gives promise that the Conservation Area will receive increased public attention and that private rebuilding activities may be attracted. A small community segment which is not presently covered by D.U.R. Study Areas could provide the focus for subsequent activity connecting the two Study Areas; it is bounded by Division Street, Hoyne Avenue, Ellen Street extended, Wolcott, Beach and Ashland Avenues. This neighborhood would be suitable for commercial and residential redevelopment to eliminate blighted structures and deleterious land uses while reinforcing existing shopping concentrations.

**B.** Residential areas north of the Milwaukee Railroad Bloomingdale Line need improved maintenance if they are to retain their present attractiveness. Progressive deterioration around Logan Square and the proposed construction of the Kennedy Expressway subway link through the area suggest it as a possible redevelopment area to provide a more attractive center for community facilities, including a rapid transit station, shopping concentration and an improved urban square.

**C.** The northern tip of the Development Area should retain its present single family character.

**D.** The residential areas south of the Milwaukee Railroad and west of the Conservation Area will require intensive code enforcement programs, in addition to the provision of improved and additional community facilities and services.

**E.** The Milwaukee-Kennedy corridor of high accessibility will provide opportunities for more intensive development, as will the Western Avenue corridor with its proposed express transit service. The present elevated rapid transit line between Paulina Street and Logan Square should eventually be relocated into a depressed right-of-way to eliminate its blighting effect on adjacent property.

**F.** Deteriorated commercial developments should

be phased out and the still viable businesses consolidated at new or modernized centers related to major intersections. Several such centers are recommended along Milwaukee Ave. Convenience shopping facilities will be provided where necessary.

**G.** Mile and half mile streets are to be upgraded to primary and secondary thoroughfare standards as needed. This will make it possible to de-emphasize diagonal streets, especially Milwaukee Avenue, which might be partially closed to encourage the formation of more attractive shopping centers and to simplify major intersections. These measures will help to eliminate through traffic from local and residential streets. The necessary street widening will also be related to replacement of some of the vacant deteriorated commercial frontages.

**H.** More open space and recreational areas are needed throughout the Northwest Development Area. These should be located next to new and existing school sites, as most of these facilities are also deficient in open space. The two academic high schools are particularly in need of site expansion.

**I.** As other streets are upgraded, vehicular through traffic should be eliminated from the Boulevard system so that some of the roadways can be closed and the greenways used for community open space. The Boulevard system could also provide opportunities for higher density residential developments near rapid transit stations.

**J.** This industrial corridor should be improved by the gradual phasing out of scattered residential development in order to provide space for industrial expansion and parking. Removal of the Milwaukee Railroad spur east of Kedzie Ave. along with some of the industry scattered along its tracks would encourage community maintenance and improvement.

Intensified community services and improved community facilities will benefit all of the Northwest Development Area. Such improvements should include stronger supportive services for presently disadvantaged groups. New police and fire facilities, improved school facilities, more efficient refuse pickup and street maintenance, as well as additional field houses and public libraries will make the Northwest Development Area a better place in which to live.

### Planning Framework Northwest Development Area

Residential



Business



Institutional



Park



Industrial



**A** East Humboldt Park—Near  
Northwest Conservation Area

**B** Code Enforcement

**C** Community Maintenance

**D** Code Enforcement, Improved  
Community Facilities and Services

**E** Corridor of High Accessibility

**F** Commercial Consolidation and Renewal

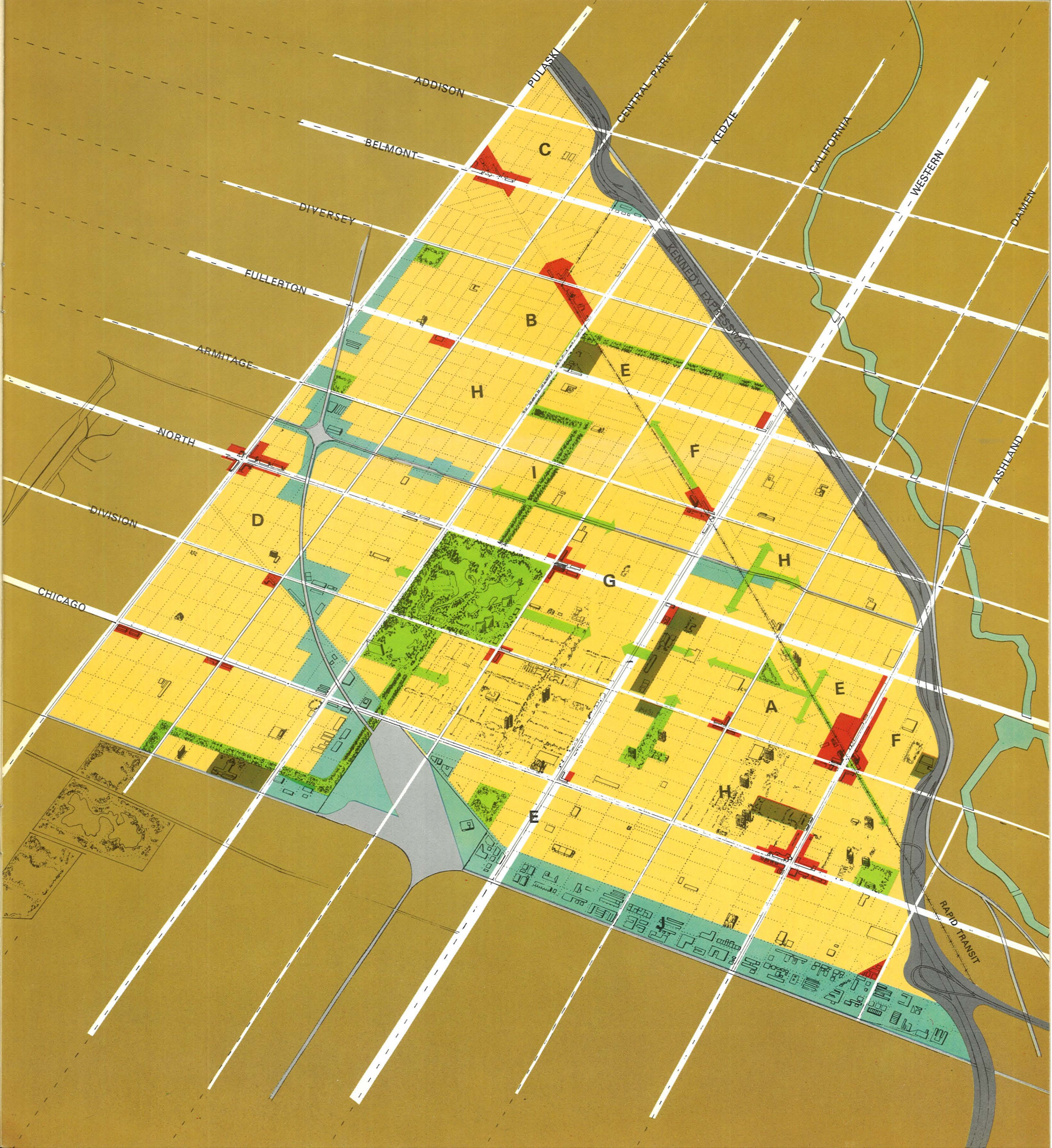
**G** Major Street Improvement

**H** Open Space and Recreation Needs

**I** Boulevard System Improvements

**J** Industrial Corridor







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and expanding these relationships in  
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proposals are reviewed.



—PREFACE—

